13: Beaglehole & Beaglehole E-5 (1938-1939) 1941
OU9 Tonga OU9
Vavau
Pangai

553 604 574 43 [844] [562] mother. The exchange of presents is greatest for a first-born son, greater for a first-born girl than for subsequent girls, greater for a first boy than for subsequent boys or girls.

GROWING UP

121 No systematic study was made of the life of children. The following note on one aspect only of this life is to be understood as only a statement of what appears to the observer of village life as obvious and frequent.

857 Children play frequently in groups which number up to ten or more members. There is little age stratification [561] because most older children, older girls particularly, have the responsibility of being nursemaids for younger children and infants. Thus it is natural that the younger children should be members of a gang-group that is led by older children. The typical group, therefore, includes children between the ages of sixteen months and seven years. These gangs spend much of their time exploring and playing in the bush or on the beach. A good deal of aggressive [865] behaviour is displayed within the group. Shouts and laughter of one moment give place to tears in the next as an older child picks up a coconut-switch and unmercifully beats one of the younger children for some disobedience.

854 As long as the infants are babes in arms they are petted, pampered, and played with. From the age of eighteen 855 months or so onwards, the children are thrown on their own resources. This means that they are free to go where they will or where they can. The mothers expect assistance and obedience if the children are playing round the house when some simple task comes to hand. The child who disobeys or 855 who is thought lazy in carrying out a command is generally 861 severely beaten by the mother. The beatings, which appear to be village-practice in enforcing discipline, are almost all carried out by adult women or by older children. The men of the household are generally away from the village all day, working in their gardens. We never saw a man direct more than the mildest of verbal reproofs toward his child. The whippings and beatings are women's work. In one instance only did we hear of a man beating a youngster. This was the case of Bovai who became enraged over the alleged laziness of his adopted son, aged fifteen years. The